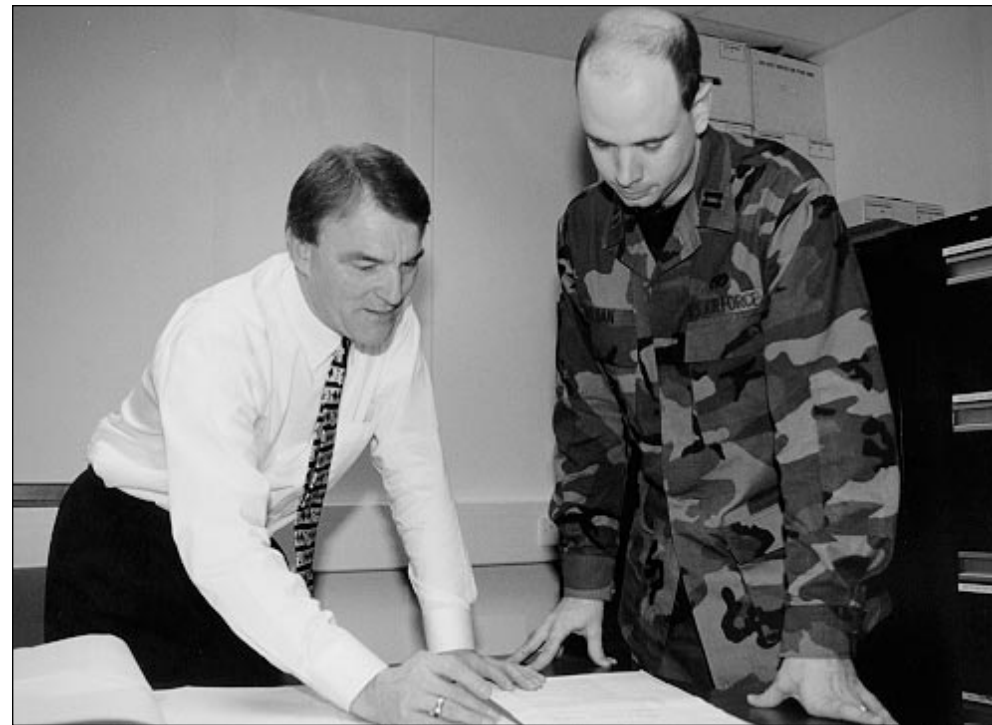


MOD employee Dave Margle, a military transport mechanic, replaces wiring on a bus.

Photos by SSgt. Steve Ball



MOD employee Ron Cury, chief of engineering, and Capt. Mark Sloan, base development officer, review plans for an upcoming building project.

housing facility manager. "We play an important role in people's stay here, and we do a very, very good job. We come into contact with every military family that comes to Lakenheath.

"About 40 percent of the tenants leave each year and we take care of all that turnover with our staff."

Housing's job doesn't end when tenants move in, Smith said. Even after a family has been placed, the office takes part in their lives and well-being.

"Part of my job is to log disputes people have with their landlords," said Joanie Howse, housing referral assistant and MOD employee. That way, an inspector can check out the problem and help fix it.

"We don't put people into houses and forget them," Smith said. "People call us with all sorts of problems. We are points of contact when people are distressed and we meet their needs."

Another MOD employee who helps make life more comfortable for the Liberty Wing is Alison Clarke, assistant customer service manager at the commissary.

Part of Clarke's job is to assist in keeping the commissary running smoothly. She helps super-

vise the cashiers, who, in turn, help the 1500 customers who visit the commissary every day.

"Things get pretty frantic around here sometimes when we're checking registers, cashiers and keeping an eye on the cash office," she said. "We deal with all the monies, make sure everything balances, do schedules for the workers and deal with customer queries and refunds. I don't think people realize all we do."

"I think the commissary helps

(provide known products to) the people stationed here. That has a huge effect on how people see Lakenheath."

Christine Eason is an MOD social worker and a substance abuse counselor at the 48th Medical Group. She brings a variety of different assets to counseling at Lakenheath.

"(Some of the assets) I contribute (include being) British and female," Eason said. "Because I've grown up here, I have experi-

ences where others may just have book information. I know the life and the ways here."

"Young military members and local nationals find Christine much more approachable at times," said TSgt. Spencer Ellis, Eason's supervisor. "She is a tremendous asset."

"I have a different sort of background than most people here," Eason said. "Our clients benefit from the diversity." She also spent some time in the military which she said gives her an understanding of the pressures military people deal with on a day-to-day basis.

Ellis has worked with MOD people for 10 years and considers them a vast asset to the Air Force.

"There are several good things about having MOD people work with the U.S. military," he said. "Continuity is one."

If people are pulled out of their work sections for whatever reason, MOD civilians help maintain things, Ellis said. They also help carry information from one staff to the next when people rotate and PCS.

"MOD workers also help strengthen Anglo-American ties," he said. "They help create stability, they know the area and they share that information. Working with MOD staff gives us the opportunity to get first-hand information about what to do and where to go."

Christine Eason, an MOD social worker and a substance abuse counselor, talks with a patient.



MOD employees: Important part of Lakenheath family

By SrA. Sarah Franco
Public affairs

Ministry of Defence employees are an important part of the RAF Lakenheath military family. Most people see them constantly, but few of us realize just how much they do to make jobs and lives easier at the Liberty Wing.

About 600 people work for the MOD here. They range from cooks to aircraft surface managers, from plumbers to legal assistants and education advisors to social workers.

MOD employees are impor-

tant to Lakenheath because they provide a lot of support in many areas, said Squadron Leader Martin Godfrey, RAF commander.

"(The MOD employees) play an important role because they live here," he said. "They provide continuity, an element service-members can't."

As an example, the housing facility section staff is three MOD people and five Department of Defense employees. They are responsible for finding housing for every military family that comes to Lakenheath.

"With our small staff, we take care of about 2,400 tenants at any given time," said Mike Smith,



Lesley Dunsford, an MOD supply storekeeper, inspects materials in the base services store.